

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Upon entry of the amendment above, claims 1-16, 18-35, 37-73, and 75-77 will be pending, claims 1, 3, 4, 8, 15, 42, 46, 50, 58, 64, 68, and 75 being independent.

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 8, 15, 16, 18-28, 30, 33-35, 37-41, 43, 45-52, 54, 61-63, 68, 70-73, and 75 are indicated as being allowed (of which claims 15, 46, and 50, were independent), and claims 3, 4, 36, 42, 58, and 74 are indicated as being allowable but were objected to for depending from rejected claims.

Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 9-14, 29, 31, 32, 44, 53, 55-57, 59, 60, 64-67, 69, and 76-78 are rejected.

Response to the Office Action

In response to the Office action, Applicants have amended the claims by ensuring that allowable subject matter appears in every independent claim, thereby placing the instant application in condition for allowance.

Specifically, the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 36 has been incorporated into independent claim 1, thereby placing claim 1 and the claims depending from claim 1 in the allowed status. Claim 36 itself has been canceled.

The subject matter of allowable dependent claim 74 has been incorporated into independent claim 64, thereby placing claim 64 and the claims depending from claim 64 in the allowed status. Claim 74 itself has been canceled.

Allowable dependent claims 3, 4, 42, and 58 have been amended by having been rewritten in independent form, thereby placing these four claims in the allowed status.

Lastly, independent claim 78 has been canceled.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The grounds of rejection advanced in the Office action have been addressed and rendered moot by means of an amendment that ensures that allowable subject matter has been introduced into each independent claim. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Payment accompanies this reply of claim fees, a fee for a three-month extension of time, and a fee for a Notice of Appeal. No additional fee is believed to be due at this time. However, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee required for acceptance of this reply as timely and/or complete to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Any questions regarding the instant application can be directed to Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number, fax number, or e-mail address given below.

Respectfully submitted,
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